Photovoice: Students' Psychological Well-being in the Marginal Area

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ABSTRACT

Online lectures are an option in an effort to stop the spread of Covid-19. This situation triggers stress that many parties experience, including students. After 1.5 years of online lessons, there are changes in student behaviour and way of thinking in terms of psychological well-being. This study aims to provide an overview of the psychological well-being of students in the marginal area in Indonesia during the Online Course. The research methodology used is qualitative using the photovoice method as part of community-based participatory research (CBPR). The research subjects consisted of 6 people as part of a student community in Nabire, Papua. The process of data capture by way of taking camera footage to specific scenes relevant to the research topic, reflecting personal and community strengths, building critical dialogue, sharing knowledge and experiences related to personal and communal issues. Data analysis uses thematic analysis through photos and narratives as data. Research shows that online learning in Indonesia has a variety of good and bad effects. The condition that was initially poorly perceived and was quite a stressor, is now overcome. Facility problems, signals, which are challenges in the marginal area still exist but can be managed. Psychological well-being is just seen by making this condition an opportunity to do many things at once. Students can work, have hobbies, spend time with family without having to leave class. The ability to be independent in the midst of freedom becomes a challenge to be able to complete online lectures.

Keywords: CBPR, covid-19, photovoice, psychological wellbeing.

Introduction

Education is the primary sector in the Indonesian nation development thus the quality of human resources is needed as a support system. People are required to work, worship, and study from home on the basis of Presidential Decision No. 11 Year 2020 on the establishment of public health emergencies related to COVID-19 (Radjasa & Priyoningsih, 2020). Joint Decision No. 01/KB/2020 of 15 June 2020 on Guidelines for the Maintenance of Learning in the Period of Corona Virus Disease Pandemic (Covid-19) that methods of learning in universities in all areas must be implemented online for theoretical courses and also for practical courses (if possible). This condition brings a major change to the conventional education that has been developed all the time.

New normal habits affect a decrease in psychological well-being in some people, as is experienced by students. Psychological well-being (Ryff, 1995) is a condition in which individuals have a positive attitude towards themselves and others, able to make decisions and regulate their own behavior. Besides of that an individual also can regulate the environment according to their needs, have a purpose in life, make life more meaningful, and seek to explore and develop

themselves. This understanding of psychological well-being is based on the humanistic theory concept of human function as a positive being of the existential and utilitarian philosophy in clinical psychology. (Ryff & Singer, 2008).

Psychological well-being was extensively studied during the Covid-19 pandemic. Different parties experience psychological well-being impacts. Doctors and health workers are most vulnerable to stress (Badahdah et al., 2020). The interesting finding is women are more likely to be emotionally disturbed than men and older doctors experience less stress than younger doctors. This is an important concern also for the ability to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic. Patrick et al., (2020) in his research showed that the psychological well-being of parents and children is deteriorating, especially among parents who are experiencing an economic crisis as a result of pandemics. This also affects the education of children who need to learn from home. Moreover, the level of loneliness as part of psychological imbalance shows high increases during lockdown periods without the presence of a specific causal factor, which could mean individuals experiencing mental health disorders during the Covid-19 pandemic. (Groarke et al., 2020).

Students also suffered the impact of Covid-19 pandemic for more than a year of online learning. The study aims to look at and express the psychological well-being of students who conduct online learning in the backward, leading, and outermost regions of Indonesia. Online learning is closely related to the facilities and access to the internet networks. Moreover, the availability of skills as a learning aid is also necessary in implementing online courses. Thus, the urgency of this research is based on complaints about the difficulties of students in accessing online courses and also their relationship with psychological well-being that requires preventive efforts at both the primary and secondary levels.

Method

The research was using photo-voice method as part of community-based participatory research. (CBPR). The Photo-voice implementation using SHOWED (What do you See here, what's really Happening here, how does this relate Our lives, why does this situation Exist, what can we Do about it) and FGD (Focused Group Discussion) techniques. (Wang & Burris, 1997).

Photo voice is one method of community-based participatory research (CBPR) that developed in the mid-1990s as a tool to enlarge representation strategies and voice certain social and political realities in society. This method is widely used to express a variety of issues in the field of public health and social justice. Photo-voice is a process of identifying their communities through specific photographic techniques that represent their lives. The photo-voice method entrusts participants to use cameras to record activities. Pure imaging provides evidence and promotes effective participatory to create public policy (Wang & Burris, 1997). Photo-voice is a qualitative approach made of critical principles, awareness, feminism, constructivism, and photographic documentation (Wang & Burris, 1997). This method is used very effectively to investigate marginal and vulnerable groups, to build public confidence at a wider level. This method requires community members to take camera footage to specific scenes relevant to the research topic, and encourages them to discuss and reflect on their personal and community strengths, build critical dialogue, share knowledge and experiences related to personal and communal issues (Suffla et al., 2012).

Research participants were active students who take online lessons in the backward, leading and outer areas of Indonesia. The research participants consisted of 6 students living in Nabire, Papua. Sample selection techniques used purposive sampling techniques with criteria of active students who live and do online learning in the 3T area, and have a camera or smartphone. The data obtained from photo-voice was analyzed using thematic analysis.

The data obtained from the interview was analyzed using the theme analysis with the constant comparative approach (Poerwandari, 2009). The data analysis procedure was as follows:

1. Systematic organization of data. Organized data includes raw data, photo data, narrative, and interviews.
2. Coding and analysis. The coding was conducted by giving a name to each file.
3. Presumption testing. Testing the presumption was conducted by writing the research question in order to focus on the analysis that corresponds to the research objectives, using a simple scheme or matrix to describe its conclusions.
4. The analysis strategy. The analytical strategy was using one-on-one case first, after which the researcher performs an inter-case analysis. This is because the researcher will obtain an in-depth and comprehensive picture of the issue under study.
5. The interpretation. The interpretation refers to the "self-understanding" of the respondent of the study, the interpretation of the "common understanding" of a society or group, and interpretations of theoretical understanding in accordance with the theory used.

Results and Discussion

Based on the data analysis, this research shows eight emerging themes from narratives written by each participant that represent the participants' feelings, thoughts, and reflections as a student during online lectures in the 3T area. Below are the themes formulated from the written narratives:

Make Peace with the Internet Signals

The Internet is a primary need in online teaching. The condition of internet signals is a challenge for students who study online from the area. Nabire is one of the regions that belongs to the 3T category, also still has barriers to internet signals. Although it is difficult to get signals, the participants have been able to settle with this condition after more than 1 year of online course.

Figure 1.
Participant D

"No internet" adalah
pemandangan yang tak asing lagi
disaat ingin membuka internet di
rumah☺
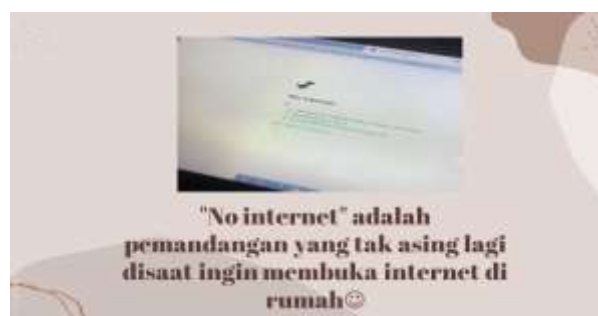
Participant D stated that "no internet" is an unfamiliar sight again when opening the internet at home. Some conditions get worse if the weather does not support. The condition that was initially conceived as something complicated, now becomes something that can be handled more calmly.

Figure 2.

Participant R

Similar conditions are also experienced by R who has barriers in searching for internet signals to support online lectures. R searches for networks by sticking a cell phone on the wall with the help of decoration. R has also been peaceful with this condition, although sometimes they also have to run to other sites because the signal are better. R now recognizes some sites with the best internet signals.

Productive

Online classes allow participants to manage activities more flexibly. Participants feel more productive during online classes because they can do multiple things at once

Figure 3.

Participants A

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Participant A stated that during online courses he could earn extra money by taking pictures of some products and selling them. Pandemic conditions made him able to do a few things that may be difficult to do while offline courses.

Figure 4.

Participant D

Similar situation was also experienced by D. He stated that during online courses he also was able to join in Kampus Mengajar program. This way made him feel more productive. By returning to Nabire due to pandemic situation, he was able to do a teaching activity program too in his area.

Adaptation of Online Courses

Online course brought a major change in the classroom system. Not only the change of the teaching media, but also the adaptation of the curriculum to pandemic situations. This is perceived as a challenge and an opportunity for the participants.

Figure 5.
Participant D

Participant D who studied in Yogyakarta experienced a time difference with in Nabire for 2 hours different. D stated that he did not find any problem for managing the class hours, but he found that activities after class hours took later time in Nabire.

Figure 6.
Participant N

The other participant, N mentioned that online courses always takes their time. They received more flexible teaching courses, but at the other hand they also got abundant of tasks. N would go to the café if he found some difficulties with the internet signal.

Environment Mastering

Figure 7.
Participants A

N also mentioned that even though he found internet signal problem, he would be still feel glad because meanwhile he could sip a cup of coffee. He thought that being accompanied by a cup of coffee and cigarettes made online courses more colorful.

Figure 8.
Participant D

Participant D interpreted the limitations of online lectures as a strength. Studying from home is fun because your family can help remind you of what to do.

Autonomy

One skill that becomes very important during online classes is independence. Flexible teaching processes require student independence in organizing time and also completing teaching tasks.

Figure 9.
Participant N

Participant N compared through his photo where he used two gadgets at once in following the classes. N must be able to adapt to the classroom when the course was difficult to be understood thus it took more strength to graduate in those courses.

Figure 10.
Participant R
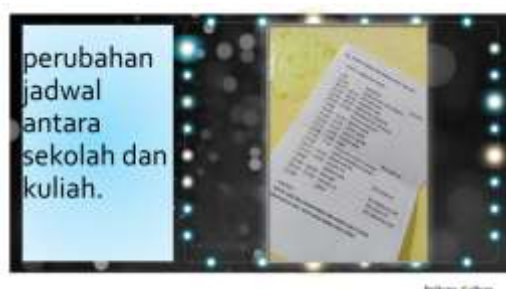
Participant R must adjust schedule changes during online classes. He created a list of daily schedules in order to be able to follow all activities.

Self-acceptance

The pandemic situation is felt quite severe for many people. Losing loved ones is a difficult. situation. But this is slowly acceptable. Participant I lost of a close friend due to Covid-19. This situation made I very sad and not enthusiastic in studying. The ability to overcome sadness was expressed in silence, but I interprets his experience with full awareness and acceptance of the dangers of Covid-19, thus he must maintain health by complying with the established health protocols.

Figure 11.
Participant I

Positive Relation

Pandemic conditions make students closer to family. Students were able to interpret closeness to family into a positive relationship which also has an impact on their success in online lectures.

Figure 12.
Participant R

Participant R has a new habit. On the sidelines of his busy studies, R could still help his parents at home, such as cleaning. This is done because the lecture process is more flexible. For him, helping each other at home is also part of routine activities during this pandemic.

Figure 13.
Participant D

Participant D experienced a similar condition where parents really provided support in online lectures. Signal problems made participant D have to be in his parents' room, because that's where the signal is the best. Parents do not mind for having to sleep late because their children need to complete their responsibilities online.

Based on the findings above, it can be seen that the condition of online lectures as an alternative to learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic can be handled better. Signal problems, although still a major problem in 3T areas, are acceptable. Photovoice can help students to better recognize positive things even in disadvantaged situations, this is in line with research (Diponegoro et al., 2020).

Photos and narration in this case also show a person's ability to give meaning or an opportunity to focus on oneself such as doing hobbies and other activities one likes. (Tanhan et al., 2021) also see the pandemic process as an opportunity to focus on oneself, to discover and learn new things, and to be productive is an important part of students' mental health. This situation can certainly be carried out if someone is able to come to terms with the problems of online lectures. Hence the ability to be independent and free in the process of self-actualization. The desires and needs of students who have high ideals can still be actualized even under different conditions. Likewise, social interactions related to mental health can still be connected socially with peers during the Covid-19 pandemic (Graupensperger et al., 2020).

The implementation of Photo-voice which is adapted to the conditions of the research site becomes the material for the researcher's evaluation. There was limited signal connection so that the research cannot be carried out via Zoom. Researchers use Whatsapp, Google Drive, and Youtube media as research tools. The perceived weakness is the difficulty in understanding the photo-voice technique so that participants feel insecure in its implementation. But this can be overcome with a personal explanation.

Conclussion

Online lectures in Indonesia which are still in effect today (2023) have had various good and bad impacts. Conditions that were initially perceived as bad and constituted a significant stressor can now be overcome. Problems with facilities, signals, which are a challenge in the marginal area, still exist but can be managed. Psychological well-being is actually seen by making this condition an opportunity to do many things at once. Students can work, do hobbies, spend time with family without having to leave lectures. The ability to be independent in the midst of freedom is a challenge to be able to complete online lectures.

Acknowledgement

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